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Education is one of the most important, if not the most important, factor in helping people to get out of poverty.



Enrolling at university to study Law.

MERRY CHRISTMAS! Whether you celebrate the Christmas Season or not may the joy and peace of Christmas be with you now and throughout the year.

[HELPING HANDS ON FACEBOOK](#)

Helping Hands now has its very own Facebook page and we'd love you to check it out. You can find us by searching for Helping Hands Cambodia (the Non-Profit Organisation) and clicking on the page that has the photo of the four men (our staff).

[OUR NEW UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME by Deborah Groves](#)

During the terrible Khmer Rouge regime (1974-1979) a very large portion of the educated people were killed. The leader of the regime was Pol Pot and his plan was to turn Cambodia into an agrarian society (a society of farming communities). To do this he believed he needed to "get rid" of anyone with an education. If you spoke another language you were killed, if you wore glasses you were killed. Even having smooth hands (which proved you weren't a hardworking peasant) was enough to get you killed. Basically a whole generation of educated people disappeared. Try to imagine for a minute if everyone in your society who had a university degree was suddenly no longer there. It's almost impossible to imagine. But you can see why we believe education is so important. It's also why we are so excited about our new university scholarship programme.

Some time ago we told all of the students in Helping Hands school in Prasat Char village that if they successfully completed grade 12 then we would pay for them to go to university. Well, the first person to complete grade 12 was our very own English teacher, Sopheap. He also informed us that a female student has also just completed grade 12 and wanted to go to university (but could not afford it.) So we promptly made the arrangements to get them both into university. Sopheap is studying English Literacy and Kong Voeung is studying Accounting with the hope of working in a bank one day. (Sopheap attends university in the morning and teaches at the Helping Hands school in the afternoon.)

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It only costs \$325 usd per year to attend university in Cambodia, but this cost is simply out of reach for the people that we work with.

We then began to think about all the other young people who had finished grade 12 in the other villages in which we work. We knew that there wasn't a lot of them so we decided to open this project up to anyone in the six villages we work in. Chanty had a meeting with the Commune Leader and Village Leaders. The Commune Leader was so happy to hear this that he was almost in tears.

Subsequently we now pay for 6 young people to attend university. There are two females, who are both studying accounting, and four males, one

studying English Literacy and three studying Law. How incredible to think that in a few years we could have lawyers and bank staff coming out of our villages!

Profile of our first female university student – Miss Voern Kong

Bree and Daniel from Narangba High School in Queensland, Australia held a fund raising event at their school recently. They raised enough money to send Voern Kong to university for one year.



Bree's Dad, Brett congratulating Voern on getting in to university. (Brett is my brother and Bree is my niece.)



and my parents are both farmers.

I am lucky that my parents could afford to send me to school. My primary school was around five kilometers from my house and my secondary school was around 25 kilometers from my house. I rode a bicycle to school everyday. I am very lucky I have a bicycle to continue my studies.

I am very happy that Helping Hands is paying for my studies at university. In the future I want to get a good job to support my family. I am in my first year and I am studying Accounting. My university is in Siem Reap, which is 30 kilometers from my village. I ride my bicycle to university everyday.

If Helping Hands had not helped me I would have had a very different future. My family is poor and I would have had to work in the rice fields. But now I think my future looks better. I am very happy to say thank you to Helping Hands for supporting me at University.

OUR MEDICAL PATIENTS written by Thea (with help from volunteers)

Helping Hands continues to save lives through our emergency medical aid programme. If we meet or hear about people that are seriously ill we offer them help. Unfortunately there are always people that need our assistance. Here are two stories about people that we have helped recently.

Mr Trai Kai

Mr Trai Kai is a 48 year old widower. His wife died of an unknown sickness 15 years ago and left him with 3 children, 1 girl and 2 boys. His daughter is 24 years old and married. He has a 16 year old son and he did have a 20 year old son. Unfortunately, his 20 year old son had a serious heart condition and he died in November – we were unable to help him.

Kai's family is one of the poorest in Peam village. He had a huge burden bringing up his children on his own. Things got worse when his son got sick. Kai tried to work very hard on construction to support his family and pay for medical treatment for his son. But even though he tried very hard he could not make enough to support his family and pay for his son's medical treatment.

Because Kai was working so hard he did not take good care of himself. He became ill but did not spend any money on medical treatment for himself because he wanted to save it for his sick son. His condition got worse and worse until he eventually collapsed and he could work no more. Mr Kai cried a lot because he was so worried about his children. They could not find anything to eat and his son was very sick and waiting for death.

Mr Kai decided to sell his small house and land for \$900 usd so that he could afford medical treatment for himself

and his son. Kai was very lucky that Thea, our Health Co-ordinator, heard about him before the sale had been finalised. Thea helped him to stop the sale and took both him and his son to hospital. Unfortunately though it was too late for his son, who passed away.

When Thea told Kai that we were going to pay for him to have surgery he cried and cr

After the operation, Thea took Kai back to his house and supplied him with food and food supplements to help make him stronger.



Mr Kai in the medical clinic waiting for surgery.



This photo was taken one day after the surgery.



A couple of weeks later at his home.

Kai is extremely grateful to Helping Hands Cambodia for helping him to get his house back and for helping him with the operation. He still can't work, but he is getting stronger everyday. Thea continues to visit him to check on his progress and make sure he has food to eat.

(We are still waiting for the final diagnosis on the Mr Kai's condition.)

[The Story of Mrs. Houn Pos](#)

Mrs. Hounn Pos is 50 years old and married. Her husband, Mr. Hounn Ton, is 52 years old. They have 4 children; 2 boys and 2 girls, and they all go to high school.

This family is one of the poorest in L'berk village. They live in a very small palm leaf house. Despite being so poor Mrs Hounn has never given up. She tries to work very hard in the rice fields and growing vegetables so that she can have money to enable her children to go to school.

Unfortunately though, because she had a problem with her health, she couldn't work as hard as normal.

Mrs. Houn Pos tried to go to the Health Centre near her village to find get help with her illness. After the doctor did an echograph, he diagnosed that she had a very large fibroid on her uterus and needed an expensive operation.



Because the family is so poor, she decided not to have the operation. She just went back home to work as normal. Her health got worse though and she couldn't keep going. She tried many ways to treat her sickness with magic from the magic medicine man in the village because it was much cheaper than an operation. However the magic treatments didn't work and she had to find another way to get help.

Lucky for Mrs. Houn, Thea, Helping Hands Health Co-ordinator, went to visit her and realised that she desperately needed an operation. The fibroid was huge by this time. Thea took her to the Siem Reap Provincial Hospital to have the operation, which Helping Hands paid for.

After the operation, Thea went to visit Mrs. Houn very often. She is now fine and can work as normal once again. Her family is very grateful to Helping Hands for helping her with the operation, which they would never have been able to afford themselves.

In Cambodian public hospitals and health clinics if you have no money you will not be treated. You have to pay for every part of your treatment. Patients also receive no food in hospital – someone from their family is meant to stay with them to care for them and provide food. So as well as paying for the medical treatment we also provide money for food while they are in hospital as well as helping them with transport costs to and from the hospital.

Thanks to MSAVLC (Medical and Scientific Aid for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) for helping with the funding for this programme.

[A DOUN UN ROAD by Brian Kuhl](#)

Imagine if you will:-

- A period of about 3 months each year where your neighbourhood is surrounded by water and mud.
- A situation where wheeled transport in and out for that period is all but impossible.
- You and your neighbours being unable to get to your place of work; and your children not able to get to school.
- If access to medical aid in an urgent situation was next to impossible.
- If a trip to get family supplies entailed a long and often dangerous journey by foot; up to 20 kilometres through flooded country to the market in the nearest town.
- If even in the dry season it took you 3 hours each way to peddle your bicycle to Siem Reap, in order to work in your construction job, for the princely sum of \$1.50 per day.

Thus was the situation for the people of the village of Doun Un and the approximate 6,000 residents of the 5 villages beyond and further into the countryside. Fortunately for them the Commune Leader suggested that this should be the next village that we should choose to implement our “work-for-a-bike programme” in. This programme involves villagers providing their labour to improve roads in their village in return for a bicycle. As well as providing the bicycles Helping Hands also assists by providing the necessary materials in the form of culvert pipes, cement etc.

Organisation was provided by village leaders and each family was allocated a section to complete. Keb Toch is typical of the villagers who participated. Keb is administrative assistant to the Village Leader. At 42 and despite suffering arthritis from a harsh earlier life, she exchanged her pen for a shovel and worked a total of 21 days, building the road and bridges and planting grass to hold the banks.

The project has been a resounding success and the road was open in time for the recent wet season. In all, 1.4 kilometres of raised roadway was constructed, encompassing three large culvert bridges and a further two bridges employing smaller concrete rings. Approximately five hundred people worked on the job, which took about four weeks to complete. The Commune Leader told us that he had been asking the Government to do something about this particular road for many years, but the funds were never made available.

The people of Doun Un Village can be justly proud of their community effort, which has improved the



quality of life for not just those in their own village but also for the approximately 6,000 people in the villages beyond. And in addition to rectifying wet season problems the new road has reduced the travelling time from the further villages to the town of Siem Reap by half, from three hours to one and a half hours.



From this to this



It is wonderfully gratifying to all at HHC, and should be to you, our supporters, to see the emergence of such a strong community spirit among people, many of whom have, until recently, been suspicious of even their nearest neighbours. Well done Doun Un Village!

Helping Hands has now provided a total of 1,650 bicycles in five villages and we are just about to start this programme in a sixth village.

[MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS by Brian Kuhl](#)

The successful management of any organisation requires regular communication and interaction between stakeholders, whether they be staff, clients, government and other agencies, and supporters. HHC is no different to other entities in this regard; and thanks to the management skills of founder Deborah, a continuing consultative process is in place to ensure all concerned with the organisation are involved in relevant decision making processes and are kept informed on activities.

Thanks to the wonders of the electronic age it is possible to hold regular meetings where there are no absentees. Thus the staff meeting held every Tuesday afternoon is attended by all, whether they are there in the flesh or looking in and participating via an internet connection.

However, the nature of our work is such that many meetings are held in a far less orthodox fashion. And while they may appear somewhat casual there is no doubt that the discussions, decisions and outcomes could be no more meaningful if the meeting were held in a fancy boardroom.

In this Christmas Edition we thought you might enjoy sharing with us the memories of some of the more unusual meetings we've had over the past few years.



Meeting by the roadside to arrange the official opening of Swift Bridge.



Director Chanty – discussing health issues with Village Representatives.



Deborah and Chanty meeting Prasat Char Village leaders



Discussing the Sanitation Project (Who invited the chicken???)



Director Chanty briefing other NGO Representatives about Helping Hands activities



Driving rain doesn't stop the meeting – but the Chair got a bit wet!!!

Introducing the newest and littlest Helping Hands team members



Deborah introducing her baby Kai to some villagers.



Teacher Savanne's little baby David.

*. Coming to Cambodia?
Need a place to stay in Phnom
Penh or Siem Reap. We
recommend **Eureka Villas** –
www.eurekavillas.com, email:
info@eurekavillas.com*

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HOW TO MAKE DONATIONS

The work that Helping Hands Cambodia does is only possible because of the generous financial support of our donors.

There are a number of options for making donations. Simply choose the option below that suits you best.....

- Do you want to deposit **directly to our bank accounts**?*
- Do you want to donate via **Paypal**?*
- Do you want to post a **cheque** or money order?*
- Are you an **Australian** and require a **tax receipt**?*
- Are you an **American** and require a **tax receipt**?*

- Please go to **OPTION 1**
- Please go to **OPTION 2**
- Please go to **OPTION 3**
- Please go to **OPTION 4**
- Please go to **OPTION 5**

OPTION 1 – Deposit directly to our bank accounts

Australian bank account details:

Bank: St George Bank
Account Name: Helping Hands Cambodia
BSB No: 114-879
Account No: 419 526 714

Cambodian bank account details:

Account Name: Helping Hands Cambodia
Account Number: 743105
Bank: ANZ Royal Bank (Cambodia) Ltd
Swift Code: ANZBKHPP

OPTION 2 – Donate via PAYPAL

- ❖ This method allows you to send money to an email address.
- ❖ Just go to www.paypal.com
- ❖ The relevant email address to send the payment to is:
helpinghandscambodia@yahoo.com.au

OPTION 3 – Sending a cheque or money order via post

You can send a postal order or cheque, made out to *Helping Hands Cambodia*, to:

Helping Hands Cambodia
PO Box 3870
Caloundra D.C., Qld, 4551,
Australia.

OPTION 4 – If you require an Australian tax receipt

Global Development Group is an umbrella organisation that we partner with in order to be able to issue tax-deductible receipts to Australians and Americans. There are several options for making tax-deductible donations via Global Development Group.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *When making a donation via Global Development Group you must make sure you mention that it is for **project J213**.*

- A. By secure **CREDIT CARD ONLINE** at www.globaldevelopment.org.au.
- B. By **CHEQUE**: Post to Global Development Group,
56 Goorari Street,
Eight Mile Plains, Qld, 4113.

Don't forget to include a note containing:

- a). the total of your donation
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

- C. By **DIRECT DEPOSIT** to Global Development Group's bank account:

Account Name: Global Development Group
Account number: 10200094

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia
BSB: 064-118

Don't forget to email us your donation details. info@globaldevelopment.org.au. Please include:

- a). the details of your deposit
- b). Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

OPTION 5 – If you require an American tax receipt

Global Development Group is an umbrella organisation that we partner with in order to be able to issue tax-deductible receipts to Australians and Americans. There are several options for making tax-deductible donations via Global Development Group.

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A. By **CREDIT CARD ONLINE** at <https://www.globaldevelopment.org.au/usa/donations.php>

B. By **CHEQUE**. Post to Global Development Group USA Inc.
1314 Longwood Oaks Blvd
Lakeland, Florida 33811 USA

Don't forget to include a note containing:

- a). the total of your donation
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

C. By **DIRECT DEPOSIT** to Global Development Group's bank account:

Global Development Group USA Inc
Routing Number: 263179804
Savings Account Number: 39599501

Bank Information:
Mid Florida School FCU
6040 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, Florida 33813
(863) 688-3733
www.midflorida.com

Don't forget to email us your donation details. info@globaldevelopment.org.au. Please include:

- a). the details of your deposit
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

Thank you for caring!